



in: Cartoon References, Christmas References

Rankin/Bass

EDIT

Rankin/Bass was an animation studio founded by Arthur Rankin Jr. and Jules Bass, best known for a series of seasonal holiday-themed specials. Many of these productions used a form of stop-motion animation called "Animagic," and used celebrities as narrators. Their best known specials, often based on popular songs, include *Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer*, *Santa Claus Is Coming to Town*, *Frosty the Snowman*, and *Here Comes Peter Cottontail*. They also produced series starring King Kong and Smokey Bear. Later productions, with much of the animation outsourced to Japan, included the series *ThunderCats*, the feature *The Last Unicorn*, adaptations of J.R.R. Tolkien's *The Hobbit* and *The Return of the King*, and a musical adaptation of *The King and I*.



"Why, I'm Joe Snow, your admirable, good natured narrator."



A wind up toy from Rankin Bass's Pinocchio, center left, in the 10 Baker Film



References

- A wind-up toy of **Pinocchio**, from the Rankin-Bass series *The New Adventures of Pinocchio*, is seen in the **10 Baker Film**.
- Joe Snow** from *It's a Very Merry Muppet Christmas Movie* is a spoof of Burl Ives' Sam the Snowman character from *Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer*.
- In *Elmo's Christmas Countdown* **Stiller** the Elf's design being modeled on his voice actor (**Ben Stiller**) is based on the similar practice used in various Rankin/Bass Christmas specials. At one point in the special, he says he wants to be a **dentist**, an allusion to Hermey the elf's misfit desire in *Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer*.

Connections

- Cynthia Adler** played Rudolph's mother in *Rudolph and Frosty's Christmas in July* (1979) and Cheryl Paisner in *The Coneheads* (1983)
- Alan Arkin** played Schmendrick in *The Last Unicorn* (1983)
- Fred Astaire** played S. D. Kluger in *Santa Claus Is Comin' to Town* (1970) and *The Easter Bunny Is*

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For some, any washer will do.

- The Easter Bunny Is Comin' to Town* (1977)
- Carl Banas** played countless voice roles between 1961 and 1972, including Dandy Lion & the Wizard in *The Tales of the Wizard of Oz* and its spin-off special *The Return to Oz*, the foreman elf in *Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer*, Professor Bond on *King Kong*, and various literary roles on *Festival of Family Classics*.
 - Camille Bonora** played all the female voices on *Tigersharks* (1987)
 - Art Carney** played Barney Killikilarney in *The Leprechaun's Christmas Gold* (1981)
 - Eddie Castrodad** provided additional voices on *The Comic Strip* (1987)
 - Judy Collins** sang the title song in *The Wind in the Willows* (1987)
 - Phyllis Diller** played the Monster's Mate in *Mad Monster Party?* (1963)
 - Mia Farrow** played the unicorn/Lady Almathea in *The Last Unicorn* (1982)
 - Seth Green** was a regular voice on *The Mini-Monsters* portion of *The Comic Strip* block (1987)
 - Joel Grey** played Joshua Trundel in *Twas the Night Before Christmas* (1974)
 - Buddy Hackett** played Pardon-Me-Pete in *Jack Frost* (1979)
 - Margaret Hamilton** played Mrs. Kloppelbobbler in *The Daydreamer* (1966)
 - Peter Hawkins** played various characters in *Tomfoolery* (1970)
 - Gregory Hines** played Noel in *Santa Baby!* (2001)
 - Skip Hinnant** played Sunny the Easter Bunny in *The Easter Bunny Is Coming to Town* (1977)
 - James Earl Jones** played Ommadon in *The Flight of Dragons* (1986)
 - Danny Kaye** played Seymour S. Sassafrass, Antoine, and Col. Bunny in *Here Comes Peter Cottontail* (1971) and Marmaduke in *The Emperor's New Clothes* (1972)
 - Alan King** played Maestro Fire-Eater in *Pinocchio's Christmas* (1980)
 - Patti Labelle** played Melody Songbird in *Santa Baby!* (2001)
 - Ron Marshall** played Mr. Thistlewhite in *The Year Without a Santa Claus* (1974) and Hallelujah Jones in *The Easter Bunny Is Comin' to Town* (1977)
 - Ethel Merman** played Lilly Lorraine in *Rudolph and Frosty's Christmas in July* (1979)
 - Roger Miller** played Speitoe the Donkey in *Nestor, The Long-Eared Christmas Donkey* (1977)
 - Zero Mostel** played Brutus in *The Little Drummer Boy, Book II* (1976)
 - Laraine Newman** played Connie in *The Coneheads* (1983)
 - Vincent Price** played Irontail in *Here Comes Peter Cottontail* (1971)
 - Claude Rae** played Mr. Toad in *The Reluctant Dragon* and Mr. Toad and various voices in *Willie McBean and His Flying Machine*, *The New Adventures of Pinocchio*, and others.
 - Miranda Richardson** played Anna Leanowens in *The King and I* (1998)
 - John Ritter** played Peter Dickenson in *The Flight of Dragons* (1986)
 - John Stephenson** played various goblins and orcs in *The Hobbit* (1977) and *Return of the King* (1980)
 - Allen Swift** played Felix Flankin, Yetch, Dracula, Chef Machiavelli, the Invisible Man, Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde, and all other monster sounds and male voices (except Boris Karloff) in *Mad Monster Party?* (1963), Melchior in *The Little Drummer Boy, Book II* (1976), Gadzooks and the newsreel narrator in *The Easter Bunny Is Comin' to Town* (1977), the Fox, Santa Claus and others in *Pinocchio's Christmas* (1980), and was heard in other specials
 - Marlo Thomas** played Bertha Plummer in *Cricket on the Hearth* (1967)
 - Alice Tweedie** played the washer woman in *The Wind in the Willows* (1987)

Walk-around versions of the *Rudolph* characters appear at *SeaWorld* parks during the holiday season, including *Sesame Place*.

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